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## PHOTO & CAPTION

# Solar Streetlights Enhance Security



Maiwand is a farming community located in the northwestern part of Kandahar Province, in the area where opposition to the government and support for the Taliban has traditionally run deep.

That attitude has been changing lately, thanks to the efforts of a progressive district governor, Obaidullah Bawari, and coalition force leaders based in the area. In the past two years, Maiwand has benefitted from various projects proposed by the governor and supported by USAID. These initiatives have greatly improved prospects for long-term stabilization and sustained economic growth in the area.

The most recent project was the installation of ten solar streetlights at the district center government compound in the village of Hotal. Approximately 300 people work in, or have access to the government compound and agricultural training center daily. Lack of public lighting in the area had led to increased insecurity in an already insecure location, so that the facilities could not be frequented safely in the evening.

In recent weeks, five solar streetlights were installed in the district government center, and five in the agricultural center. The project was managed by a USAID-funded initiative that

**Ten solar streetlights recently installed in the district government center and agricultural center in Maiwand light up the compound at night and greatly improve security and safety in the area.**

promotes the use of renewable energy resources – solar, wind, and hydro – throughout the country. The Zularistan Solar Company, an Afghan-owned firm, performed the installation and trained two men to operate and maintain the streetlights.

Now, people visiting the government compound in the evening can go about their business in greater safety and peace of mind.

“These lights make a big difference,” observed Muneer, a student visiting the agricultural center one evening. “I used to be scared whenever I came here. Now I know security is a lot better.”